(b) whether there has been any increase or decrease in the production of these vehicles as compared to the years 1983-84 and 1984-85?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) and (b) The production of two-wheelers, three-wheelers and Jeep type vehicles in the country between 1983-84 and 1986-87 has been as under:—

(Nos 000)

Statement

	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87
Two wheelers	780	898	1191	1384
Three wheelers	39	44	50	54
Jeep type vehicles	22	23	28	30

Disease due to dust among the coal miners

2958. DR. R. K. PODDAR: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pneumoconiosis, a disease which is rampant among the coal mines and is caused by dust hazards in coal mines, is increasing alarmingly among the mines working in BCCL and other coal companies;

(b) whether Government would consider to undertake a quantitative survey of serious air pollution in Dhanbad due to the Open Cast Mining of Coal and Stack burning of coal by Bharat Coking Coal Limited jointly by the premier institutes like National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur and Central Fuel Research Institute, Dhanbad; and

(c) what steps Government intend to take for the protection of miners from this disease?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) There is no evidence to suggest that Pneumoconiosis is increasing amongst miners working in BCCL and other coal companies.

(b) detailed environmental study is proposed to be conducted of Jharia and other coalfields of the nature as suggested with the help of appropriate expert agencies.

(c) Pneumoconiosis is caused by inhalation of fine dust particles. The coal companies are taking elaborate dust suppression measures and trying to generally improve the envoinment in their Open Cast and Underground mines. Better diagnostic facilities in companies' hospitals and periodic medical examination of workers, specially underground workers is arranged for early detection of this disease. Pneumoconiosis Boards have been set up in all the subsidiaries to determine the degree of disability suffered by workers hit by this disease.

Appointment of Directors in Peerless Company

2959. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Questions 841 and 1571 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 16th and 23rd November, 1987, respectively and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Peerless Company has contested in the Court of Law the decision of the Central Government to nominate four Directors to the Board of Management of the Company;

(b) if so, what is the Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what made the Government to appoint four Directors on the Board of Management of the Company under Section 408 of the Companies Act, 1956?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Government has received information to the effect that Peerless General Finance and Investment Company Limited have filed a writ petition before the Calcutta High Court challenging the decision of the Company Law Board to appoint four directors, under Section 408 of the Companies Act, on the Board of Directors of the company.

(b) Action will be taken as per legal advice.

(c) Government apponted four directors on the Board of Directors of the Company in pursuance of the order passed by the Company Law Board.

Withdrawal subsidy under no industry and backward region criteria

2960. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to withdraw subsidies under no industry and backward region criteria; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) and (b) Central Investment Subsidy and Central Infrastructural Assistance under the existing scheme are available till 31-1-1988. The schemes have been reviewed by an Inter-Ministerial Committee and decisions on the report have not yet been taken by the Government.

Salt industry

2961. SHRI NARAYAN KAR: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of edible salt produced and distributed state-wise, during the seventh plan period;

(b) the cost of production, average freight-charges and the selling price of salt; and

(c) whether there is any crisis in this industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Statements I and II showing State-wise production of salt and distribution of edible salt during 1985, 1986 and 1987 (upto September 30) respectively are annexed (*See* below).

(b) The cost of production of salt varies from place to place depending on location of work and quality of salt. For instance, in Gujarat it varies from Rs. 35 to Rs. 50 per tonne while in West Bengal it is over Rs. 160 per tonne The average cost of freight is about Rs. 250 per tonne by rail The average F O R selling price of salt ex-factory is Rs 80 per tonne excluding cost of gunny bags.

(c) There is accumulation of salt due to over production in all major salt producing centres on account of prevailing drought conditions. Some of the steps taken by the Government to stimulate domestic and export and export demands to ease salt stocks accumulation are:

(i) New industrial units for production of Soda Ash|Caustic Soda have been licensed. The present units have been advisesd to maximise their production to increase the consumption of salt.

(ii) Fresh assignment of land for salt manufacturing has been kept in abeyance for two years.

(iii) Export of common salt has been decanalised and brought under OGL.